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Message Text

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70
ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SNM-02 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-10 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 SY-05 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-03 OMB-01

SS-15 PA-01 PRS-01 ISO-00 /067 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/LA:GEBROWN:BT
APPROVED BY ARA/LA:GEBROWN
S/NM: - RDUGSTAD (SUBSTANCE)
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY
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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJECT: NY TIMES SERIES ON LATIN AMERICAN HARD DRUG TRADE

1. APRIL 21 THE NEW YORK TIMES CARRIED ON ITS FRONT PAGE FIRST IN SERIES OF ARTICLE ON DRUG TRADE COMING FROM LATIN AMERICA. (CARRIED ON USIS WIRELESS FILE FOR "STAFF USE ONLY"). IT CITED THE REGION AS "THE MAJOR SOURCE FOR HARD DRUGS ENTERING THE US." IT IS WELL RE-SEARCHED SERIES AND GIVES GENERALLY ACCURATE PICTURE OF PROBLEM. NEVERTHELESS, THE SERIES IS LIKELY TO DRAW MORE ATTENTION TO LATIN AMERICA TRAFFIC THAN IT HAS RECEIVED IN PAST , POSSIBLY COMPLICATING OUR RELATIONS IN NARCOTICS MATTERS WITH SOME OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION.

2. THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PROVIDED THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN FOR THE NOON PRESS BRIEFING, BUT THE SUBJECT
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WAS NOT RAISED. YOU MAY DRAW UPON IT AS APPROPRIATE:

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Q: WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THE TIMES ARTICLE ON LATIN AMERICA BEING A CHIEF SOURCE OF HARD DRUGS ENTERING THE U.S.?

A: LATIN AMERICA IS CERTAINLY A MAJOR SOURCE FOR HARD DRUGS ENTERING THE U.S. THIS HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED IN THE HEMISPHERE AND THE GOVERNMENTS IN THE REGION HAVE BEEN COOPERATIVE IN TRYING TO STEM THIS TRAFFIC. WE CANNOT CONFIRM THAT LATIN AMERICA IS THE "CHIEF" SOURCE SINCE, GIVEN THE

ILLEGAL NATURE OF THE TRAFFIC, IT IS HARD TO BE CERTAIN OF THE ORIGIN OF ALL NARCOTICS ENTERING THE U.S.

Q: BUT WHAT ABOUT THE CORRUPTION IN THOSE GOVERNMENTS REPORTED BY THE TIMES?

A: I CANNOT CONFIRM ANY OF THE ALLEGATIONS MADE IN THE ARTICLE ABOUT CORRUPTION.

Q: WILL THE NARCOTICS ISSUE BE DISCUSSED BY THE SECRETARY DURING HIS VISIT?

A: THE COUNTRIES THE SECRETARY IS VISITING ARE NOT MAJOR TRAFFICKING CENTERS AND HAVE BEEN COOPERATIVE IN TRYING TO CONTROL SUCH TRAFFIC AS THEY MAY HAVE. IT IS NOT AN ISSUE THAT WE WOULD EXPECT TO COME UP. KISSINGER

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